



**The Phoenix Family Readiness Group Newsletter**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Special Troops Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (M)**  
**Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07**



**Issue 22 ~ 1-15 August 2006**

**H**ello again from sunny Camp Taji.

The Soldiers from the Phoenix Battalion have carried their great performances into the month of August. With the deployment dwindling down to less than four months, the Soldiers are excited to complete the mission and head home. In this edition of the 1STB Newsletter, you will hear from the Eagles, Outlaws, Thunderbirds, Nighthawks, and Renegades.

## **EAGLES**

As Bravo Company's time in Iraq is rapidly decreasing, the missions and the overall tactical network continue to increase. In order to support the call for an increase of operations, Bravo Company has quickly expanded its tactical network.

A small team of Bravo Company's best communication specialists was recently sent out to set up an additional Command Post Node. The team was led by Telecommunications Operations Chief, SFC Gonzalez. The team included a High Capacity Line of Sight operator, SPC Everman; an Information's Systems Operator, SGT Royster; and a Joint Network Node operator, PVT Labrador. The team successfully installed a vital communications link. Due to the efforts the soldiers of Bravo, an entire Division of Coalition Forces is able to communicate effortlessly with Iraqi units as well as other Coalition units.

In addition, Bravo Company was tasked to provide signal support for the movement of one of our battalions. A team of keen professionals was called upon to install

vital equipment for expanded operations in this battalion's new area. CW01 Collins, the Network Management Technician, led the team. The team included a High Capacity Line of Sight operator, SPC Wright and a Signal Support Systems Specialist, SGT Morris. Due to the hard work and dedication of Bravo Company, the battalion is now able to maintain a constant line of communication to 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade and all other coalition units across the Baghdad AO.

The Soldiers of Bravo Company work hard to accomplish the many tasks that are required for tracking, FM, telephone and internet communications between commanders on the battlefield. Bravo Company to date maintains the largest deployed signal network in the Iraqi theater. The morale is high and the Soldiers of Bravo are always ready to embark on new and upcoming missions.



**Above: Eagle Soldiers set up sites to enable communications for the Brigade.**

## **THUNDERBIRDS**

The Support Platoon in the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Troops Battalion is full of highly diverse and

capable Soldiers who have succeeded in completing a variety of missions outside of their duty Military Operational Specialty (MOS). The Support Platoon contains the largest diversity of MOSs in the Battalion, ranging from cooks, fuelers, and truck drivers, to light wheel and track mechanics, to generator and small arms repair mechanics, to list just a few. The Support Platoon has been serving the Battalion by providing Civil Affairs convoy security, while still maintaining support operations.

After a mission change, the Support Platoon received the task to reorganize and form into security teams. Those teams were conducting security escort combat patrols in sector within one week of receiving the mission to reorganize. This speaks volumes of the ability of the Platoon's Soldiers and NCOs to adapt and overcome when faced with new challenges. The Thunderbirds' missions range from escorting Task force Ironclaw, to providing security escorts, to Camp Taji tower guard, and when needed conducting combat patrols in with the Brigade Area of Operations(AO).

## OUTKAST

Great changes came to 4<sup>th</sup> Platoon, "OutKast" with the completion of one more month in Iraq. The new OutKast 6 is Lt Cedillo, who came to 1STB from 1-66 AR and will serve as the new platoon leader. Coming down from the 1STB TOC, SSG Burton is the new NBC Platoon Sergeant. PFC Thai is also a new addition from 7-10 CAV and he will serve as one of the Bradley section drivers. The OutKast Platoon also added the new Civilian FOX mechanic Dan O'Connor. The Bradley Platoon Sergeant, SSG Cook added an additional member to his family fire team with the birth of his new daughter. Congratulations also go out to PFC Thai and

SPC Utley as they pinned on shiny new PFC and SPC rank.



**Above: SPC Haberstick conducting mission in the Buffalo.**

## NIGHTHAWK

Fellow Fellow Phoenix Soldiers and Family Members;

I'd like to take a second to introduce myself and talk about Alpha Company. My name is Captain John Shermer and my wife Maggie and I are so excited about finally being at the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Troops Battalion, and Alpha Company (MI) in particular.

Alpha Company continues to do a tremendous job here in Iraq and everyone's welcome for my wife and I has been great. The soldiers are trained and hardened by so many months spent fighting elusive enemies in the unforgiving furnace of an Iraqi summer. I've had to good fortune to work with them in a staff capacity for the first half of this deployment. It's a great opportunity to get to work even closer with them on all of the missions that we do everyday. The company certainly has been busy. They're all over the Brigade's Area of Operations gathering data for upcoming missions, all the time, every day.



**Above: SGT Danna with children**

At the pace that we are going I know we couldn't keep up with all of it if it wasn't for the support of all of you back home. Our families keep us going when things get hard over here. The care packages and pictures continue to brighten all of our faces. You people back home, our families, are our favorite subject. We talk about all of the loved ones that we have back in the States waiting for us. I look forward to seeing some of the folks that I've been hearing about when we get back. I've certainly enjoyed learning about you all through the Alpha Company Soldiers.

Finally, I'd like to congratulate some pacesetters in Alpha Company. SSG Ramos, SGT McManus, and SPC Fossler who were recently presented with the Army Achievement Medal for actions in 1<sup>ST</sup> Bde. And I'd be remiss, if I didn't mention SPC Poltera, who just scored Expert on his M16.



About Maggie and I: We're from Louisiana and Tennessee, respectively. We've got a little girl, Rebecca who will be turning one this

month. We've been inside of 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade for some time now, but we didn't get the chance to get over to the Phoenix battalion until last month. We've been looking forward to it for some time.

## A WORD FROM RENEGADE 6

Hello, members of the FRG. Once again I can't believe it is already time to write to you and tell you about some of the great things the Renegades are doing. We started the month with the promotion of SGT Jason Grunow, a member of the S2 (Intelligence) Section. It is always a special promotion to sergeant because it takes you from being a simple Soldier to a Non-Commissioned Officer, which is a big step in any young Soldier's career. Another big event this month was the reenlistment of SPC Donny Anderson. He is looking forward to a few more years in the Army, and I wish him the best of luck.

Another great event that took place this month was the Renegade BBQ. What was the special occasion...nothing, just an opportunity to give the Soldiers a break and have a good-time. We started the BBQ off with several promotions, which included SGT Emmanuel Carlorodriguez from the S2 Section, SPC Gary Bixler from the FEC, PFC Ryan Bridgford from PSD, and PFC Karol Marquezaricila from PSD. After the promotions and a quick little speech from their Company Commander (me), we did what we came to do, which was eat. SFC Shawn Wilding and CW3 Sabrina Nero helped put everything together, and the result was beyond expectations. We had all the traditional BBQ food like hot dogs and hamburgers, plus some outstanding traditional Iraqi food made by some of our Interpreters. It was a true treat and the Soldiers have really earned the break.



Finally, I would like to talk about another one of our sections, perhaps one that does not get a lot of attention due to the nature of their job. Who am I talking about...well Intelligence of course. But we like to call them the Silent Warriors. They are led by a great NCO SFC John Ferguson. The Section is organized into different teams, with different missions, all of which are to provide the Brigade Commander and the rest of the Brigade with the information they need to be successful. The ACT or Analysis Control Team, led by SFC Heath McLaughlin, builds the briefings that the Commanders sees to make decisions. The Terrain Team, led by SSG Charles Vincent, produces the maps and digital imagery of the battlefield for the Brigade Staff and more. The S2 OPS team led by SGT Alexis Sutter and SGT James Whitesides gives the Commander the current battle intelligence he needs to make decisions. The S2X team led by SPC Johnnie Smith and PFC Humberto Corral review the tactical team and detainee reports, and provide the information to the ACT and the Brigade Commander. Finally, the Fusion Cell, led by CW1 Jarmaine Carlton, CW3 Paul Franks, and CW1 Antonio Monserrate, fuse all the information together for a quick direct link for the Brigade Commander. Over all, these guys do some pretty secret, but important stuff, that gives the Brigade Commander the information he needs to make the right decision.



**Above: SSG Vincent supporting map requests.**



## **To Dare Is To Do**

**Larry A. Seaman**  
**Command Sergeant Major**  
**U.S. Army**

**John W. Cross**  
**LTC, EN**  
**Commanding**